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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 000947

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STATE FOR EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2017
TAGS: MARR MCAP NATO PREL RO
SUBJECT: RFG: GOR CONSIDERING NATO STRATEGIC AIRLIFT
FLAGGING/BASING ARRANGEMENTS FOR C17S

REF: A. DAO BUCHAREST IIR 6 883 0242 07

¶B. DTG 210954Z AUG 07

Classified By: Political Counselor Ted Tanoue for reasons 1.4(a)(b)(d).

¶1. (C) This message is a request for guidance. See para 3 below.

¶2. (C) MFA NATO Directorate Deputy Director Ana Tinca on August 21, raised with Polmilloff a request for USG position on the prospects for the GOR to advance at NATO a proposal for developing Romania's Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) to include the possibility of hosting and flagging NATO's SAC C-17s. Tinca noted that the Hungarians have advanced a proposal for Papa Air Base, but the GOR would like to press forward its own proposal, but only if the USG has not committed itself on the SAC basing issue. Tinca noted that MOD DG for Policy Dragos Ghercioiu has raised this issue with the Embassy, and that the MFA is inclined to support the MOD initiative.

¶3. (C) RFG: Due to the short time before this issue is on the September agenda by NATO, and in light of the pending visit by USNATO Permrep Nuland to Bucharest when the question surely will be raised, Mission would appreciate Washington's reaction NLT September 4, to a possible GOR proposal regarding NATO SAC basing/flagging issues.

¶4. (C) Comment: Mission recognizes that there would be some infrastructure and resource challenges for the MOD if the GOR moves forward with a NATO SAC proposal. There are, however, some clear benefits strategically, including shorter (fuel) distance to NATO's presumed active theater of operations (ISAF), easy transport of supplies/materiel (for example to Mihail Kogalniceanu Airbase) via rail, the Danube River transport system and port of Constanta. It seems that if the GOR is willing and able to make such a commitment, we would propose not discouraging it from fielding a proposal with NATO. End comment.

TAPLIN